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Fulbright Gets to Attend CIA's Senate Briefing

With Senate Foreign Relations Committee members attending for the first time, the Senate's CIA watchdog committee has received a top-secret intelligence briefing on world affairs and particularly the Vietnamese war.

CIA Director Richard Helm gave the briefing, under tight security, in the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing room yesterday. The meeting lasted from 2 to 4:30 p.m.

Afterward, Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., who heads the CIA panel, said the briefings covered "the waterfront." But he added that it was all highly classified and nothing could be revealed.

In what may be the end of a long-standing controversy, Chairman J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., and two other members of the Foreign Relations Committee attended the meeting at Russell's invitation.

Information Sought

Members of the Foreign Relations Committee have been demanding access to information on CIA operations. They contend they should have it because the CIA often involves itself in foreign policy matters.

After the meeting, Fulbright said it was "too soon to say" whether the arrangement would satisfy his committee.

Others from the Foreign Relations Committee who were invited and attended the briefing were Sen. Bourke B. Hickenlooper of Iowa, the ranking Republican member, and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana, who is third in seniority on the Democratic side.

Not included was Sen. Eugene McCarthy, D-Minn., who sponsored a resolution last year that would have set up a nine-member intelligence committee, made up of three representatives each from the Appropriations, Armed Services and Foreign relations committees. As for yesterday's meeting, McCarthy said:

"This is substance of what we are asking for. There remains, however, a question of whether

this can be given and taken away. It would be more desirable if formal action were taken by the Senate to establish the right of the Foreign Relations Committee to information about operations of the CIA."

May Be Permanent

Russell was asked if participation by members of the Foreign Relations group would be permanent and replied that it would be "as far as I can see at the present time."

Mansfield said he was invited because of his leadership position and added that he understood Senate Republican Leader Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois also would be asked to attend.

Russell, however, said the three senators were invited because they were on the Foreign Relations Committee. Since Dirksen is not a member of that committee, the Georgia senator said he had not been asked to attend.

Sen. Karl E. Mundt, R-S.Dak., was added to the watchdog committee yesterday, representing the appropriations subcommittee.